Operation Wolf

Operation Wolf (オペレーションウルフ *Operēshon Urufu*) is a one-player shooter video game made by Taito in 1987.[1] It spawned three sequels: *Operation Thunderbolt* (1988), *Operation Wolf 3* (1994) and *Operation Tiger* (1998).

Contents

Gameplay

Assuming the role of Special Forces Operative Roy Adams, the player attempts to rescue five hostages who are being held captive in enemy territory. The game is divided into six stages, each of which advances the story when completed. For example, after the Jungle stage is completed, Adams interrogates an enemy soldier and learns the location of the concentration camp where the hostages are being held. This was one of the first shooter games to feature a storyline.
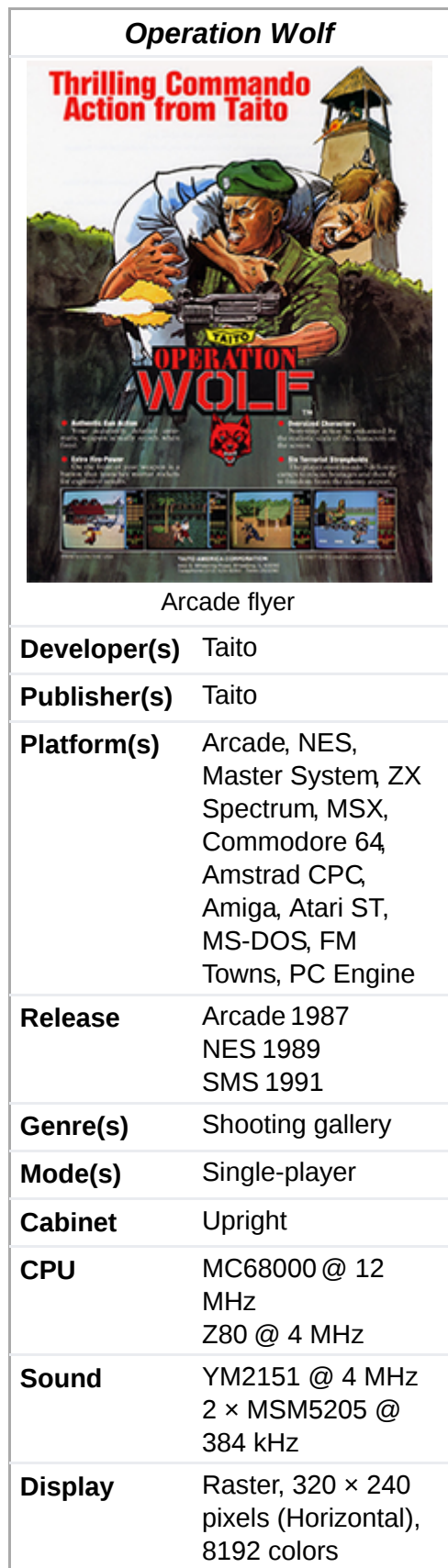
The game utilized an optical controller housed inside a gun assembly scaled after and which bore a strong resemblance to the Uzi submachine gun. This, in turn, was mounted on top of a square base covering the pivot shaft which allowed players to swivel and elevate the "gun". A geared motor inside the casing simulated the recoil felt by the player when they "fired" the weapon at in-game targets.[2] Pulling the trigger allowed fully automatic fire, while pressing a button near the muzzle launched a grenade with a wide blast radius that could hit multiple targets.

In order to complete each stage, the player must shoot a required number of soldiers and vehicles (trucks, boats, helicopters, armored transports), as indicated by an on-screen counter. The player begins with a limited supply of ammunition and grenades, but can find more throughout the game, either openly displayed or revealed by shooting crates/barrels, coconuts in trees, and animals such as pigs and chickens. Dynamite bombs cause heavy damage to every target on the screen, both enemy and friendly, and a special machine gun power-up allows unlimited ammunition and an increased rate of fire for 10 seconds.

Enemies attack with gunfire, knives, grenades, mortar/bazooka rounds, and missiles; all but the first of these can be shot out of the air. The player has a damage bar that slowly fills as hits are taken; in addition, shooting friendly targets such as nurses and boys adds to the bar. Damage can be recovered by picking up health power-ups and completing stages.

The six stages, and their objectives and effects on gameplay after completion, are as follows:

Operation Wolf	
Arcade flyer	
Developer(s)	Taito
Publisher(s)	Taito
Platform(s)	Arcade, NES, Master System, ZX Spectrum, MSX, Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC, Amiga, Atari ST, MS-DOS, FM Towns, PC Engine
Release	Arcade 1987 NES 1989 SMS 1991
Genre(s)	Shooting gallery
Mode(s)	Single-player
Cabinet	Upright
CPU	MC68000 @ 12 MHz Z80 @ 4 MHz
Sound	YM2151 @ 4 MHz 2 × MSM5205 @ 384 kHz
Display	Raster, 320 × 240 pixels (Horizontal), 8192 colors

- Communication Setup -- Mission: Obstruct. Competing this stage reduces the number of enemies the player must eliminate in all other stages.
- Jungle -- Mission: Intelligence. Completing this stage allows the player to access the Concentration Camp.
- Village -- Mission: Rest. Completing this stage heals a large amount of the player's damage, as opposed to a small amount after all other stages.
- Powder Magazine -- Mission: Ammunition. Completing this stage grants the player a full supply of ammunition (nine spare magazines and one loaded into the weapon) and either five additional grenades or a total of eight, whichever is less.
- Concentration Camp -- Mission: Aim (a poor translation of "Objective"). The player must protect the five hostages as they run to safety. In order to advance to the Airport stage, at least one hostage must survive.
- Airport -- Mission: Getaway. The player must protect the surviving hostages as they run toward the open hatch of an airplane taxiing down a runway, then shoot down a final, heavily armed helicopter. Skipping the Powder Magazine or Village stages adds two helicopters or two armored vehicles to this stage, respectively.

Completing the Airport stage with at least one hostage rescued awards a bonus based on the number of stages played and the number of hostages who boarded the plane. A new operation then begins at a higher difficulty level, with a fully healed damage bar and a fresh supply of ammunition.

The game ends if any of the following events occur:

- The damage bar fills completely
- The player's ammunition and grenades are exhausted
- None of the hostages escape the Concentration Camp
- None of them successfully board the plane at the Airport

Continuing the game allows the player to restart the last stage played.

When the language of the game is set to English, the six stages are always played in the above order. As a result, the effects of the Communication Setup and Jungle are not obvious, and the number of enemies in a particular stage remains constant from one operation to the next. When the language is set to Japanese, only the first four stages are initially available and the player may choose the order of play, allowing for strategic planning.

The ported version to the Nintendo Entertainment System allowed for multiple endings depending on how many hostages were rescued. The player would be awarded points in the form of "combat pay" and be greeted by the President of the United States.

Home conversions

Gameplay screenshot of Operation Wolf on MS-DOS

The game was ported to the Amstrad CPC, DOS, the NES, the Master System, the FM Towns, Commodore 64 and the PC Engine. Most of these ports lack any kind of light gun support (with the exceptions of the NES, Master System, and the ZX Spectrum, which featured Magnum Light Phaser support) and must be played with a keyboard or a controller. The box for the Master System version features promotional art from *Operation Thunderbolt*.

In 2005, *Operation Wolf* was released on the Xbox, PlayStation 2, and Microsoft Windows as part of *Taito Legends*; however, light gun support is unavailable. On February 4, 2008, the NES version of *Operation Wolf* was released on the North American Wii Virtual Console. Whereas the NES version allowed NES Zapper support, the VC re-release does not feature any kind of light gun support (including the Wii Remote's pointer functions), making the game only playable with the standard controller mode.

Reception

The game was commercially successful. On the *Coinslot* dedicated arcade game chart, it was number four, behind *Street Fighter*, *Continental Circus*, and *WEC Le Mans*.[15] On the Spectrum sales charts, it was number two, behind *RoboCop*, which was number one every month for most of the year[16]

The game was also critically acclaimed. It won several awards at the 1989 Golden Joystick Awards for 1988, including overall Game of the Year (8-bit) as well as Best Coin-Op Conversion (8-bit) and Best Coin-Op Conversion (16-bit).[17] *Sinclair User* gave it the "Over The Top Game of 1988" award, for the "shooting game most likely to push you over the edge" in 1988.[18] It was later voted number 26 in the "*Your Sinclair* Readers' Top 100 Games of All Time" poll.[19]

References

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2. Taito. "Operation Wolf (arcade maintenance manual)" (http://www.arcade-museum.com/manuals-videogames/O/Operation%20Wolf%20Operating%20Manual.pdf) (PDF). Taito. Retrieved 29 April 2015.

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Review scores	
Publication	**Score**
AllGame	★★★★★[3]
CVG	92%[4]
Crash	91%[5]
Sinclair User	90%[6]
Your Sinclair	9/10[7]
ACE	894/1000[8]
Commodore User	9/10[9]
The Games Machine	90%[10][11]
Gen4	93%[12]
The One	89%[13]
Zzap!64	91%[14]
Awards	
Publication	**Award**
Golden Joystick Awards	Game of the Year (8-bit), Best Coin-Op Conversion (8-bit), Best Coin-Op Conversion (16-bit)
Sinclair User	Over The Top Game Of 1988
Crash	Crash Smash
Computer and Video Games	CVG Hit

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External links

- *Operation Wolf* at the Killer List of Videogames
- *Operation Wolf* at MobyGames
- *Operation Wolf* at SpectrumComputing.co.uk
- *Operation Wolf (video game)* on the Amiga at The Hall of Light (HOL)